



14 Tips for New School Counselors

Make a colorful start to a successful first year!

1 Find a mentor school counselor.

The South Dakota School Counselor Association offers a mentoring program to members.

Visit sdschoolcounselors.com for more information.

2 Visit with your administrator to discuss expectations.

Get a feel for his/her vision for the school and understanding of your role.

Discuss your responsibilities for the school year.

3 Complete the Annual Administrator Conference.

This makes sure you are both 'on the same page' for your counseling program's goals.

Visit the ASCA National Model Templates & Resources to access the form.

4 Gather and collect data.

Gather data to understand your school's strengths and areas for growth, such as achievement data.

Collect data on perceived needs through needs assessments.

5 Prepare introductory materials.

Create a brochure, presentation, and/or web site to introduce yourself and the role of the school counselor to parents, teachers, students and the community.

6 Present "Meet the Counselor" lessons.

Present about your role as a school counselor to every class.

Educate teachers on your role and meet with parents to explain what you do.

7 Become familiar with the ASCA National Model.

Utilize the ASCA National Model, 4th Edition to implement your own school counseling program.

Find implementation templates at the ASCA National Model Templates & Resources page.

8 Avoid the therapy trap.

Explain that school counselors do not provide long-term therapy.

ASCA's web site has resources on school counselor roles, duties and competencies.

9 Complete a yearly calendar of activities.

Update this yearly to have a roadmap of your plans for the school year.

Visit the <https://doe.sd.gov/cte/counselors.aspx> to view a calendar template.

10 Track your time.

A use of time assessment will show how much time you spend on direct and indirect student services.

Visit the ASCA National Model Templates & Resources to access a Use-of-Time Calculator.

11 Establish an advisory council.

This group should meet at least twice a year and is valuable to assist in validating and advocating for your program.

Visit the ASCA National Model Templates & Resources for advisory council templates.

12 Plan your professional development.

Consider which conferences, workshops, webinars, etc. you plan to attend for the school year to keep up with pertinent topics.

13 Join professional associations.

A few to consider are: South Dakota School Counselor Association (SDSCA), South Dakota Counseling Association (SDCA), and American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

14 Practice self care.

The first year can be stressful! Don't forget to take care of yourself.

'Practice what you preach', utilizing self-care strategies.



South Dakota
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